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MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT FOR A FOREIGN POST

How One Association Gains And Holds It

Membership Support For a Foreign Post—How One Association Gains and Holds It

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SECTION OF WEST SIDE LOBBY EXHIBIT DURING HAVANA WEEK

The West Side Branch of New York City believes in the foreign work of the Young Men's Christian Association. First, because of the obligation resting upon every organization bearing the name of Christian to spread abroad Christ's spirit and His teachings. Second, because of the opportunity which the foreign work affords of developing among the membership the spirit of service which is the spirit of Christ.

While the branch was still young, it became interested in the foreign work. The beginnings were small. The first year $900 was contributed toward the support of M. A. Clark in South America. The next year it was decided that West Side should have its own special representative. Joseph E. Hubbard, Harvard 1900, then student secretary of Virginia, who was about to begin work in Havana, Cuba, was assigned. With the taking on of the special representative, the budget was increased to $3,600. This amount was given annually for four years, when the withdrawal of a large contributor reduced it to $2,400. The Cuban budget now is raised from among the general membership. In addition to this, there are special contributions of $2,000 from a member of the Committee of Management for the work in Madras and of $1,000 from two others for the China work. Thus, the total raised by the West Side Branch for foreign work in the year 1913 amounted to $5,400.

The raising of the money is in the hands of a committee of fifteen known as the Havana Committee. Every department of the Association is represented on this committee. In this way the foreign work is made an activity of the entire Association and not the work of any one department. This committee conducted recently its annual foreign work week, including a canvass for funds.

On the Friday preceding the foreign work week, a complimentary dinner was tendered the members who had consented to serve on the teams, to acquaint them with the Havana work and the methods of the canvass. A foreign

secretary was present and spoke. His message sent the men forth with enthusiasm and a determination to win.

An effort is made to keep the Havana work a live issue the year around. Frequent notes of the work and extracts from letters from our representative appear in West Side Men, the weekly paper of the branch. News-letters are sent to all contributors several times a year. Copies of his annual report are sent to the larger contributors.

For five or six weeks previous to the canvass, brief articles pertaining to the Havana work appeared in West Side Men. In the issue immediately preceding the week, a full-page article with a half-tone of Mr. Hubbard, our representative, was run, reprints of which were used as campaign literature.

It was planned so to decorate the lobby of the Association that no one could pass through without having his attention called to the Havana work. American and Cuban flags were draped at conspicuous points. On the wall over the office hung a large painting of New York and Havana harbors. As the money was raised a boat made its way from New York to Havana, advancing one mile for each dollar subscribed. The best piece of publicity was the Havana building which was erected in the center of the lobby, with wax figures representing Mr. Hubbard and his associates welcoming the young men of Havana. This exhibit afforded a point of contact for the appeal to contribute.

The Publicity Committee's duties were to create an atmosphere so that it would be easier to approach men for gifts for the Havana Fund. The effort of this committee was to get men thinking and talking about the Havana work. Where we succeeded it had two effects. First was the one made directly on the man who was thinking of giving. He saw the lobby decorated with Cuban flags and his curiosity was aroused when he saw the scene from Havana, arranged with scenery borrowed from a theater and wax figures borrowed from a department store. He also saw the pictures of scenes in Havana. He felt that we were giving

some thought to our work abroad, and, realizing its importance, he could not very well refuse the appeals that were made to him by committeemen. The second value was the encouragement to men who had volunteered to act as solicitors. They, knowing this previous advertising had been done, felt they had the backing of the Association and could approach men much more easily for contributions.

The foreign work week canvass was started at the Sunday meeting, when a short statement of the foreign work of the Association was made. On Monday morning all the teams started out in earnest. There were eight teams representing the physical, educational, religious, boys, social, business and employment departments, and the dormitory men. The various teams were made responsible for certain amounts based on opportunity for solicitation and success in previous campaigns. Whether the apportionment was reached or not the effect was good and better results were secured than if no definite apportionment had been made.

One of the things that made for the pleasure and success of the campaign was the competition which developed between several of the teams. One team had held the record for subscriptions for several years. It started off with a rush and within a few days had reached its apportionment. Another team, which in previous years had run a poor third, started off slowly with the secret determination to win out. On the last day of the campaign it had passed the first. When the fact became known the first team got busy again, which in turn stirred the second on. As a result both teams far exceeded their apportionment and, even after the campaign had theoretically closed, they were still at it.

The teams used various methods. The chairman of one team used three subscription lists. One, which he called the "de luxe," was for subscriptions of $10 or over, a second for $5 subscriptions, and the third for all subscriptions under $5. The man to be approached was sized up and the proper list presented. In the educational department a letter was

written to each student enrolled in the classes. This was followed by a personal appeal before all classes when subscriptions were made. Other teams worked largely in the lobby. As far as possible cash subscriptions were secured. When this was not possible a pledge was taken, made payable within thirty days. About half of the subscriptions were by pledges.

Each night a report, as accurate as possible, was turned in so that it was known at the close of each day exactly how the campaign stood. In this way the teams that were falling down could be strengthened.

A special feature was made of the closing of the campaign. At the conclusion of the Saturday Nighter, the announcement was made that the amount had been raised and the boat was about to reach Havana. Passing to the office, several hundred men took hold of a rope which was attached to the boat on the wall. At the signal from the chairman of the committee, amid shouts and cheers, the boat was pulled into Havana Harbor and the campaign was over.

The spirit of the campaigners and their enthusiasm for the work are revealed in the following statements. The chairman of the business department committee writes: "I am of the opinion that the campaign conducted in this Association for the foreign work is of immense value to the membership and to those of us who participate in the work, chiefly because it gives the secretaries an opportunity to meet a large number of the men, thereby enlarging their circle of acquaintances in the membership. In the second place, it has its value to the members by not only bringing them in touch with the secretaries but in cultivating the habit of giving for foreign work. Moreover, it has a value in enlarging the vision both of secretaries and members of the task in which they participate. It seems to me that the much lauded personal contact method is worked to the largest possible degree and with very satisfactory results in our campaign here. I am sure that the men in the business department enjoyed the time they spent

in procuring the funds for this work. It is needless to say here that in the internal workings of the Association a campaign of this sort affords large opportunity for the spirit of coöperation among the different departments, which in itself is sufficient cause for undertaking a piece of work of this kind."

The work of the dormitory team was so unique and so different from that of the other teams that special mention should be made of it. The dormitories accommodate 308 men. To work among these men a special dormitory committee of thirty-seven men was organized, three from each of the twelve floors with a chairman. By this organization the chairman supervised the work through his twelve subchairmen. Much enthusiasm was shown by the men. The element of competition between the various floors entered in and helped in the raising of the money. That the committeemen were in earnest is evidenced by the following incident. As one of the secretaries who lived in the dormitory got off the elevator in the wee hours of the morning, one of the doors opened and a fellow rushed out and said, "Well, now, I have you at last." As the secretary straightened up, wondering what he had done, the excited fellow saw his mistake and apologized: "I beg your pardon, I thought you were ——. I am after him for Havana and I will get him if I have to stay up all night to do it."

The dormitory committee chairman writes: "The appeal was made to the fellows not as a foreign mission enterprise but as a West Side extension movement. Some of the men might have been antagonized by the term foreign missions. But when the proposition was put up to them as an opportunity to help give the fellows in Havana some of the same privileges which they themselves enjoy at West Side, they saw it in a new light. Their interest was secured at once and in the majority of instances their contributions as well."

The physical department team won the contest, raising $600 from the men in the gymnasium. "The basis of the

appeal," said the physical director, "was that there are young men down in Cuba who need just the same kind of recreation center that we have here at West Side, and when put up to them in this way they respond generously. To the man who could not quite see the proposition from the above standpoint, the situation was placed before him that it was because someone was thinking of the New York boy and others were contributing to the support of our Association to place its privileges within the reach of the average man. Someone had to do this for a new Association in a new community where the people were not educated up to the Association standard. Therefore, we appealed to our members because they know from actual use what the Association can do for a young man."

The amount needed was raised and money provided in addition for the expenses of the Foreign Work Committee. The by-products were as valuable as the product itself. Ninety men were banded together in unselfish service for the promotion of an unselfish work. Eight hundred and fifty-three members were led to give of their means to their fellow men. Better still, hundreds of men, as they passed through the lobby and the various classes of the Association during that week, were reminded of the Christ spirit which regards all men as brothers and love as the greatest thing in the world.

FOREIGN WORK LITERATURE

CHRISTIAN PAN-AMERICANISM. *By P. A. Conard.* Twenty-four pages descriptive of the South American countries—their glory, power and perils, and the operations of the Young Men's Christian Association against common enemies of character and civilization. Prepaid, per hundred, $3.00; dozen, 50 cents; 5 cents each.

FIVE YEARS OF PROGRESS. A review of Association work in China and Korea from 1907 to 1912—a stimulating record of accomplishment. Price prepaid, per hundred, $10.00; dozen copies, $2.00; single copy, 20 cents.

ANOTHER YEAR'S PROGRESS. Report of the China National Committee for 1913—"a year of unexpected opportunities, problems and results." Price prepaid, per hundred, $10.00; dozen copies, $2.00; single copy, 20 cents.

MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT FOR A FOREIGN POST—HOW ONE ASSOCIATION GAINS AND HOLDS IT. *By E. Graham Wilson.* Prepaid, per hundred, $2.00; dozen, 25 cents, single copies gratis.

SHALL WE SPEND HALF A MILLION? *By Arthur Rugh.* A sixteen-page pamphlet of concise answers to the questions Why, When, Where, How the Foreign Work is done. Prepaid, per hundred, $2.00; fifty, $1.00; dozen, 25 cents. Sample free.

THE SECOND CITY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. *By B. R. Barber.* A fresh twenty-page pamphlet, illustrated, describing Calcutta and the program and achievement of the Young Men's Christian Association toward meeting the moral and religious needs of its youth and manhood. Prepaid, per hundred, $3.00; dozen, 50 cents; 5 cents each.

THE MEN OF INDIA AND CEYLON. *By E. C. Carter.* In a recent revision are marshaled fresh facts concerning the history, development, present status and opportunity of the Young Men's Christian Association in India and Ceylon. Prepaid, per hundred, $3.00; dozen, 50 cents; 5 cents each.

FOREIGN MAIL ANNUAL, 1914. An annual review of the Foreign Work. Prepaid, per hundred, $10.00; dozen, $2.00; 20 cents each.

FOREIGN MAIL. A bi-monthly periodical of 32 pages, illustrated. Annual subscription 25 cents; in clubs of ten or more 15 cents each.

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